supplement not the Monthly Newsletter and copies of these are regularly supplied to the Parliament Library.

[Translation]

Staff Shortage in Regional Rural Banks

3687. DR. ARVIND SHARMA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether most of the Regional Rural Banks are facing staff shortage;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government are aware that the staff shortage is adversely affecting the functioning of these Banks; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to provide adequate staff to the Regional Rural Banks?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (d) Most of the Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) have relatively high establishment costs relative to the volume of business. In order to contain the expenditure on establishment and thereby improve the viability of the RRBs, they have been advised not to undertake any recruitment, save in exceptional situations, without prior approval of Government. RRBs, however, may make a request for fresh recruitment. The request for additional staff has to be based on a thorough assessment of their work-load in terms of volumes and amount of business and the scope for optimal utilization of existing manpower and should be recommended by the sponsor banks and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

[English]

Joint Sampling of Coal

3688. SHRI N.J. RATHWA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received some proposals/suggestions from the Government of Gujarat regarding joint sampling of coal during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals/suggestions received; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) and (b) A reference on joint sampling of coal despatches to Gujarat thermal power stations was received with the suggestion that the joint sampling may be reverted back to the power station end.

(c) The dispute on the venue of joint sampling of coal is common to most of the thermal power stations. After careful consideration it has been decided by the Government that joint sampling will be undertaken at the loading point.

Losses in H.M.T.

3689. DR. M. JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Lamps Division of HMT Hyderabad is being closed down; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and how the surplus staff is likely to be utilised?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Badla System

3690. SHRI O.P. JINDAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has decided to review the present 'Badla' system prevalent in share market in Bombay;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it would affect the market in any way; and

(d) if so, the details therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of answer to (a) above.

[English]

Demand for Indemnity Bond by S.B.I. from Pensioners

3691. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether nationalised banks are authorised to demand Indemnity Bond in addition to the letter of undertaking, from first time pensioners who opt to receive pension through banks after retirement;

(b) whether some branches of the Meerut Zone of